

Gov. Locke kicks off Energy Technology Collaborative

PNNL involved in unique five-year agreement to accelerate growth of Northwest energy technology industries

Gov. Gary Locke announced last Wednesday the formation of the Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative. The announcement was made at a signing ceremony attended by the founding members.



Governor Locke

The collaborative is a joint, voluntary effort of business, government, nonprofit organizations, industry and educational institutions in the Pacific Northwest. They include Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Avista Corporation, the Bonneville Power Administration, the Spokane Intercollegiate Research and Technology Institute and the Washington Technology Center. The founders share the common goal of positioning the region as a recognized leader for innovative research, education and product development for energy technology markets around the world.

Members of the collaborative believe that, in the coming decades, the U.S. energy infrastructure must incorporate innovations in operating strategies, technologies and business models to remain economically viable in today's global economy. They cite three primary national issues driving the need for this change:

- The 21st century global economy requires an energy infrastructure that is flexible, scalable and reliable.
- Concerns about national security and economic stability require that U.S. reliance on foreign oil be reduced.
- Environmental impacts must be minimized to ensure the highest quality of public health.

"Washington state has the potential to become a world leader in the development and marketing of clean energy technologies," Locke said. "The collaborative will help us ensure that the state's entrepreneurs, researchers and policymakers work together on a strategy that allows us to realize this vision and, ultimately, improve people's lives."

As detailed in the agreement, the collaborative will invest financial and in-kind support for the next five years to accelerate the growth of the region's energy technology industry. Current projects under consideration are primary market research, identification of intellectual property for commercialization, coordination of research-and-development efforts, and establishment of energy technology demonstration projects. Additional members from the region are anticipated. ■